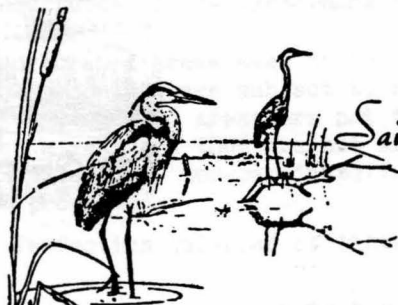




Saint Louis Audubon

Bulletin

Volume 42, Number 1

March - April, 1976

FOURTH ANNUAL DINNER

The program for the fourth annual dinner of the St. Louis Audubon Society on May 24 1976, promises to rival the previous three in quality of entertainment. Harvard Hecker will show his film, "Feathered Bonus" on African birds, and Mrs. Chris Condon will play and sing for us.

Mr. Hecker, an engineer by profession, has a hobby of nature photography and conservation activities. He and his wife Patty, who will narrate the film, are active in many environmental organizations and are charter members of the Wild Canid Survival and Research Center at Tyson. The pair has travelled extensively - to Alaska, all parts of the American West, to the Galapagos and of course, to Africa. They have gone to Africa five times together and Mr. Hecker has been there several more times. He feels that many camera buffs concentrate on the large mammals, but neglect the birds. He has climbed Mount Kilimanjaro and taken many films of that region. This film on the birds has been shown only once to some of their friends in another state. The showing at the Audubon Dinner will be the first in this area.

Those of you who attended the 1974 dinner and annual meeting will remember with pleasure the delightful playing and singing of Clare Condon. She is extremely talented in both music and art, and has a most refreshing sense of humor. This combination of attributes means that both her selection and rendition of songs, poems, etc. will add much to the enjoyment of the evening.

This year's dinner will be held in the Sesquicentennial Room of the Busch Memorial Center of St. Louis University, where last year's successful dinner was held. This year both meat and vegetarian menus will be available. Dinner will be served at 7:00 P.M., with a cash bar starting at 6:00. Soft drinks and fruit juices, as well as the more potent drinks, will be on tap. Guests will be most welcome.

Six new directors will be elected at the dinner. The nominating committee, consisting of Mrs. Joel Massie, chairman, Mrs. Edward Mason, and Kurt Wesseling will present a slate of nominees. Additional nominations may be made from the floor.

See insert for reservation slip.

Focus on the



Betty Wilson

FLOOD PLAIN MANAGEMENT

In recent years the Federal Government has spent many billions of dollars to indemnify flood victims for property losses. Since 1936 more than \$7 billion have been spent to construct flood protection works. Yet, annual flood losses amount to about \$1.25 billion and are continuing to increase, largely as a result of the USE of the nation's flood plains. Congress has begun to recognize that controlling the actions of people rather than of water is the only long-range solution to this recurrent problem. By limiting the development of flood prone land, this act permits a natural cycle to continue but minimizes its impact on people and eliminates taxpayer subsidization of those who choose to build and rebuild on hazardous land and then expect the government to pay for their listake.

The National Flood Plain Insurance Program, established in 1968 under the Housing and Urban Development Act, sought to provide low-cost subsidizing insurance against flood losses to residents of communities that agreed to CONTROL FUTURE DEVELOPMENT OF FLOOD PRONE LAND. For a variety of reasons the program, when operating on a voluntary basis, did not succeed in providing coverage to large numbers of people.

So in 1973 Congress passed the Flood Disaster Protection Act, which makes community and citizen participation in the program mandatory (if a flood hazard exists) in order for any federal or federally-insured or regulated institution to lend money for property acquisition or building.

The alternative to spending ever growing sums to keep the floods away from the buildings is to keep the buildings away from the floods. This requires planning to manage flood plains, discouraging their development so they can retain their natural functions of serving the river and recharging groundwater. Such management has the additional benefit of reducing the necessity for flood protection works, which have been increasingly criticized for their high costs to aesthetic values, fish, wildlife and other environmental concerns. Insurance, as provided by the Flood Disaster Protection Act, appears to be a fine first step toward achieving a sensible use of flood prone lands.

The Act mandates that by July 1975 all affected communities must have their new building codes in effect. But that is not all: no property owner in a flood plain area that is not part of the program by July 1975 or within one year after his area is so designated by HUD, will be eligible for any disaster area relief!

MISSOURI

Missouri, generally speaking, is a water rich state. It contains about 19,000 miles of streams (including 8000 miles of intermittent streams). The has as many lakes, large and small, as any other state in the nation. Of the more than 44 million acres in Missouri, 5 million are in the 100-year flood plain (a 100-year flood has a magnitude that may be equaled or exceeded once every hundred years. On the average, such a flood has a 1% chance of being equaled or exceeded in any given year). This makes Missouri a flood prone state.

The Flood Plain Management Bill (HB 1094) was introduced in this session of the State Legislature by Representative Holt. The legislation would give political subdivisions in the state authority to regulate development in flood plain areas in compliance with the Flood Protection Act of 1973 (PL 93-234). It is enabling legislation.

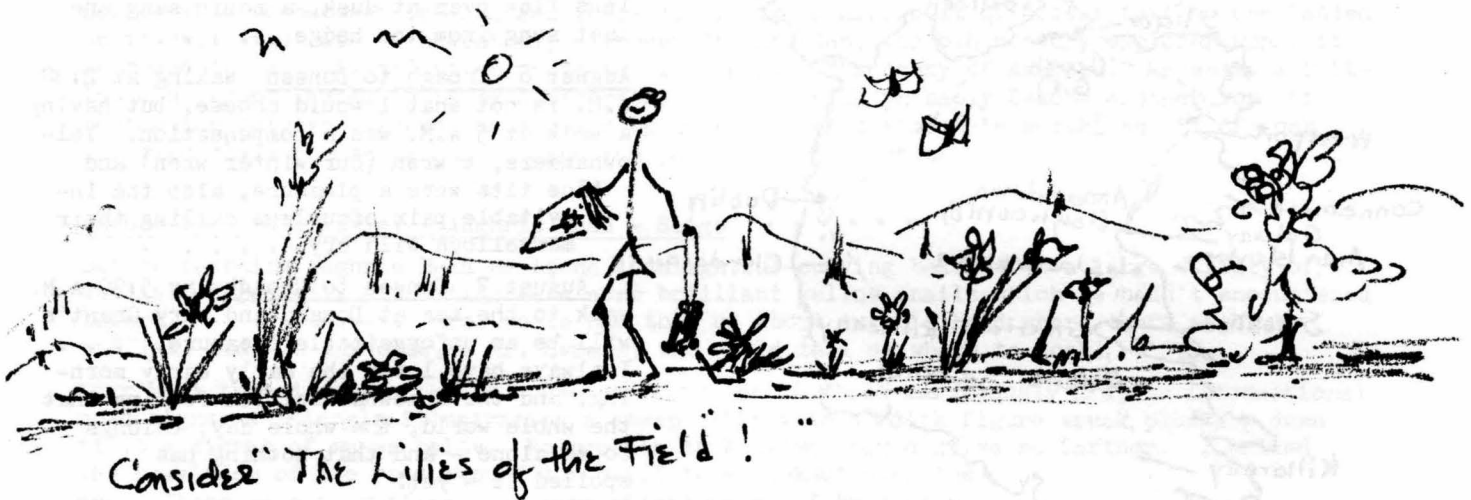
HB 1094 would give Missouri County Courts and Municipalities the option of adopting a flood plain management plan to avoid the threatened cut-off of federal disaster relief.

The legislation was assigned to the Committee on State Parks, Recreation and Natural Resources. The Committee reported out the bill "Do Pass" with one minor amendment.

HB 1094 is not mandatory and provides no state controls. However, it does allow another avenue for participation in the Federal Flood Insurance program. It will give an opportunity for Missouri counties without over-all planning and zoning to adopt flood plain zoning with the concurrence of the landowners in the designated flood plain.

Flood plains in incorporated areas seem to be meeting the deadline but those in unincorporated areas in unzoned counties are subject to real risks. 325 areas are now participating in the program. 200 designated areas are not in the program. These areas have had such designation for over a year and thus are not eligible for disaster relief. HB 1094 encourages the approximately 200 non-participating communities to take advantage of the Flood Disaster Protection program.

The bill is on the Perfection Calendar of the House. TELL YOUR LEGISLATOR THAT YOU SUPPORT HB 1094.



ENVIRONMENTAL UPDATE - 1976

Last year through the combined efforts of many organizations a successful series of "Earth Week" seminars was held in St. Louis. These same sponsoring organizations, spearheaded by the American Lung Association, have planned a 1976 version which will be bigger and better.

The programs are designed primarily for the benefit of junior and senior high school students in the St. Louis area who are in science or environmental classes and clubs. However, the public is invited.

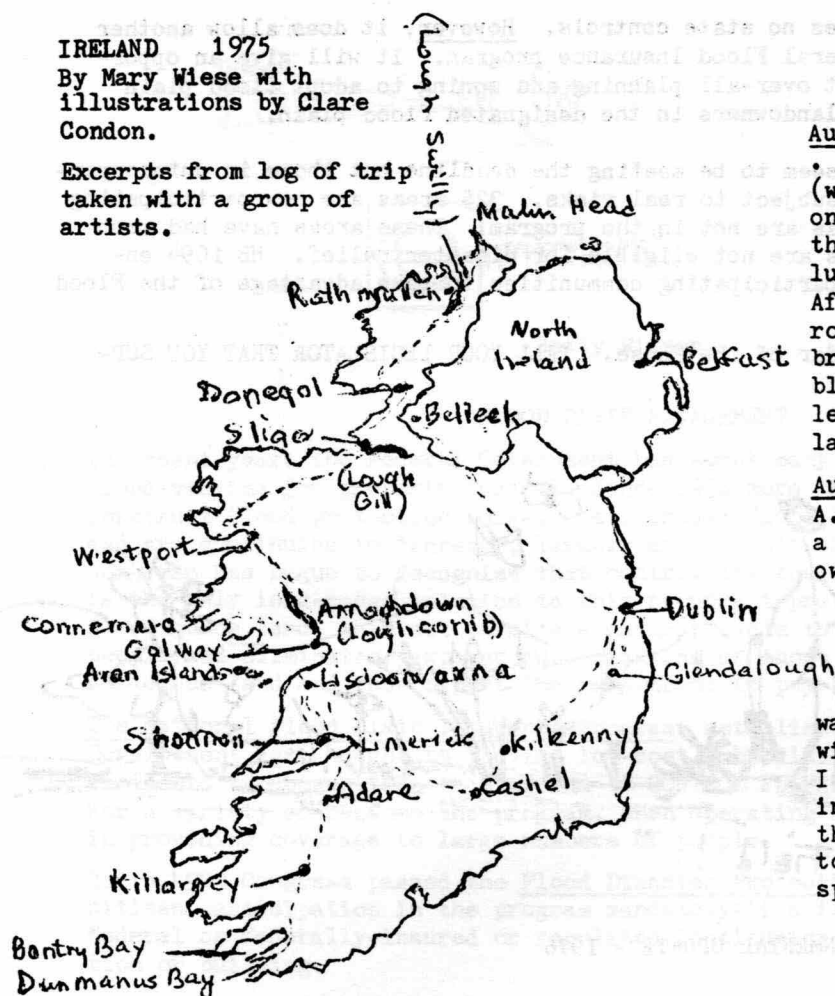
"Environmental Update" will be held at the J.C. Penney Building at the University of Missouri-St. Louis on April 27th. The programs will begin at 9:30 am and close at 3:00 pm. A wide variety of seminar topics will be featured as the following list will attest:

1. Energy Alternatives
2. Animal Ecology and Conservation
3. World Population/ Food Production
4. Nuclear Energy
5. Recycling
6. Air Pollution
7. Water Pollution
8. Land Use
9. Waste Disposal
10. Organic Gardening

The St. Louis Audubon Society has been invited to participate by staffing an information booth and furnishing a speaker. Audubon members Clair Condon, Lee Mason and Debbie Dey have volunteered and will represent our organization. Mr. Ed Ortleb, First Vice-President, is on the planning committee for this year's program.

IRELAND 1975
By Mary Wiese with
illustrations by Clare
Condon.

Excerpts from log of trip
taken with a group of
artists.



August 4-5 St. Louis-Shannon-Croagh

... Despite news accounts of drouth (which in Ireland must mean that it rains only every third day instead of every day) the countryside looked just as green and lush as it was supposed to look. ... After supper, Clare and I walked the hedge-row-enclosed road and she introduced me to brambles (delicious and nutritious, like our blackberries or better) and nettles. Curlews flew over at dusk, a robin sang one last song from the hedge. ...

August 6 Croagh to Duneen Waking at 2:30 A.M. is not what I would choose, but having a walk at 5 A.M. was a compensation. Yellowhammers, a wren (our winter wren) and blue tits were a pleasure, also the inevitable pair of curlews calling their marvellous wild cry. ...

August 7 Duneen to Croagh My 5:30 A.M. walk to the sea at Donald and Mary Grant's will be an unforgettable treasure. ... I always have loved the early early morning, and the somewhat selfish feeling that the whole world, the whole day, belongs to me alone - and that nothing has spoiled it - yet!

At the Grants it belonged to me and the goats who must have been surprised to see a human being so early, since the Grants have the Irish habit of late rising. Beyond the goat pasture a song thrush was out on the lanegathering food for its babies in the bramble hedge. Lower down, stone chats were perched on clumps of ragwort, churring excitedly as I passed. Out at sea were the usual gulls and cormorants, and gannets sailing slowly by on set wings, like four-pointed flying crosses.

As I was about to follow yesterday's lane to the pier a stoat (weasel) on a wall on the right and made my choice for me. He was only the beginning. Further along were three black and white oyster catchers in a field, which they apparently preferred for sleeping to their usual haunts by the shore. The path climbed now to the last high cliffs before the sea, and there above were a group of large rabbits (hares?) oblivious to the hunting stoats, having a last gambol before disappearing into their dens for the day.

August 8 Adare ---- I wandered happily through the castle and the grounds, primarily beside the mossy stream. Moorhens, little grebes, and herons, plus some anonymous ducks were not major finds, but I had fun tracking them down. More exciting were the butterflies, the peacock and the tortoise shell.

August 10 - Annaghdown Lough Corrib is one of several ling narrow lakes which extend inland from the sea along the west coast of Ireland. The first day there we all walked down the lane to the pier jutting out into the shallow brackish lake. While the others settled to painting --- I walked on the usual search for birds and flowers. Nothing much on the lake, but the fields nearby yielded two lifers, a twite which looks like a dull female purple finch, and a reed bunting, another finch with a more distinctive black, brown and white pattern. I spent too much time trying to decide whether one of those dull olive European warblers was a chiff-chaff or a willow warbler. It's an almost impossible task without the song in the spring and completely ridiculous, especially for an amateur, in the late summer. Flowers are really much more satisfactory since they hold still and don't have to be heard to be recognized. By the lake were some blue harebells and eye-bright, a tiny relative of the snapdragon.

There was one beautiful compensation for the annoyance of the return trip - a lake just at dusk with at least 36 swans on it. With their straight necks and yellow and black beaks they must have been a flock of migrating whooping swans rather than the more common mutes. We saw pairs of that species on almost every lake.

. . . Clare . . urged me to hear an interview with Sean O'Donnell, a science writer for the Irish Press, who was coming by that evening. He was very full of himself, but quite interesting. The Spanish Armada is one of his specialties. Many of the ships were blown onto this west coast during the desperate attempt to return to Spain, including one treasure ship, wrecked off the coast of North Ireland. Efforts to raise these ships are going on now. He scoffs at the theory that the dark skins of western Ireland are the result of the activities of these Spanish sailors, since he feels that most of them died in the wrecks or were killed. Another special interest of his is Rockall Island which is the tip of a submerged volcano between Ireland and Iceland. It is so difficult of access that no one landed on it until the late 19th century, although St. Brendan, the 6th century explorer monk, is supposed to have sighted it en route to his probable discovery of America. Recently a British contingent landed on it by helicopter. Rockall will probably become another bone of contention between Ireland and England because whoever claims this worthless bit of rock can also claim the sea around it and the potential oil beneath it.

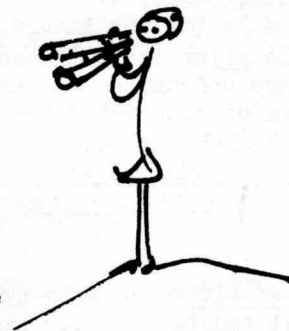
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August 14 - Ballygawley - Aughris Head - Sligo

Before reaching Aughris Head we found a delightful curving beach with a large variety of shells. Especially enchanting were some brilliant yellow snails which we hadn't encountered before. Mrs. Hosie had told us about Aughris Head where there might be puffins, and, in any case, a Mr. Sweeney who could tell us where to look.

Near what turned out to be his house we found one of those marvelously graphic international road signs: a triangle illustrating a steep cliff with a stick figure truck plunging down it to a zigzag of waves below. No problem to know we should drive no farther. I walked the remainder of the road around the cliff to a lookout over the sea. There were no puffins, but many wildflowers. I brought a nosegay back to Marilyn, who had stayed behind.

By that time Mr. Sweeney had appeared. He pointed out a hut on a hillside a half mile away from which we might start a cliff walk guaranteed to produce puffins. Yes, he was sure they were there. No, he didn't care to look at my bird book. (after all, he could see all the birds he wanted. No need for pictures!) No, he couldn't go with us, since he had company, but he would get us something which would assure our success. This turned out to be a large bucket of rocks, which we were to heave over the cliffs - at which the alarmed and probably irate puffins were supposed to appear. I dreamed up a fine sentence to describe the scene: pelted by ponderous pellets powerfully propelled by petulant, puffing pilgrims the properly peeved puffins promptly appeared!



If only they had! I now suspect the whole affair was a fine Irish put-on. The books said the puffins were supposed to go out to sea as soon as the young were fledged, in June, but everyone kept saying there would be puffins, so I kept hoping. And a bucket of rocks lugged up to the top of a rocky cliff? Coals to Newcastle? Still, it might work so we took a few along just in case. Brave Marilyn stayed with me, carrying most of the rocks, so I could have my binoculars at the ready - and when we neared the top - there were the puffins, I thought! I assured Marilyn that she was present at one of the great moments of history - when Mary Wiese saw her first puffins. A second look turned the triumph to ashes. Those bobbing black and white objects with what seemed to be large orange beaks turned out to be lobster buoys.

There was nothing left but to walk the cliffs, at which point Marilyn cautioned me to be careful and sat down to have a cigarette to calm her nerves and wait for my return. By now I was discouraged, but I edged along the edge - and heaved a few rocks just in case, feeling rather foolish. There were lots of birds and if I hadn't had my heart so firmly set on puffins I would have been thrilled. There was a "life" species - fulmars - graceful gull-like relatives of the shearwaters, which fly on stiff set wings just below the tops of the cliffs. There were also the kittiwakes, which are a species of small black and white gull of northern waters. And many cormorants, which flew off complaining as I pitched those stupid rocks. . . .



CONSERVATION NEWS OF INTEREST
Edgar Denison

WOOL GROWERS PRESSING FOR POISON 1080: Ranchers and wool growers met with Interior Secretary Thomas S. Kleppe during the last week in January. They are clamoring for the use of the dangerous toxicant 1080 for an "experimental" program to control predators and they want Kleppe to revoke the 1972 Executive Order ban on poisons for predator control. The National Audubon Society and other concerned groups have requested a meeting with Kleppe, and National Audubon wants to explain its position opposing any further relaxation of the 1972 ban. The precedent for weakening the ban was set last summer, just as conservationists had feared, when the ranchers were victorious in their fight to re-register the use and sale of sodium cyanide: It is now in wide use throughout the west. Conservationists are urged to write to Kleppe opposing any use of 1080: The Department of the Interior, Washington, D.C. 20240.

BLACKBIRD CONTROL BILL BLITZ: Massive amounts of dangerous chemical toxicants will be used in Kentucky and Tennessee to kill hundreds of thousands of blackbirds and other "pest" birds under the auspices of a bill blitzed through both houses of Congress January 27 and signed by President Ford on Wednesday. H.R. 11150, introduced by Tennessee Representative Robin L. Beard and supported wholeheartedly by the Tennessee and Kentucky delegations in both houses, provides that all roosts over 500,000 shall be treated with chemicals registered for bird control if the governor of either state certifies to the Secretary of Interior that such roosts represent a significant hazard to human health, safety or property through April 15, 1976. Conservationists, who were unaware of the bill's existence until after it had passed through Congress, were appalled to discover that the provisions of NEPA, the pesticide law, or any other law, civil or criminal, will not apply to these bird control programs as stated in the Act itself. Both EPA and CEQ recommended that the bill be vetoed at hearings held after the bill had passed both houses. "Hysterical claims of an emergency health hazard are unfounded, the manner in which this legislation was handled is shocking, and the bypassing of laws established for the protection of citizens and their environment is frightening," stated Bob Hughes, Chairman of the Club's Wildlife Committee. Members are urged to express their concern over the summary handling and serious implications of this action to their congressional representatives and to President Ford.

SANCTUARY LIST: A state-by-state listing and thumbnail description of the 62 areas the National Audubon Society protects, or helps to protect, as wildlife sanctuaries, is now available from the Public Information office in New York. (Copies have already been sent to our Regional Representatives, Centers, etc.) Most of these sanctuaries are NOT open regular hours to the public (either because they are physically difficult to get to, or because visitors could disturb nesting birds or other wildlife) and can be visited only by special arrangement.

HOW MANY ACRES FOR EAGLES NEST? A crucial wilderness issue involving a historic court case which has been a key element in the Club's efforts to protect potential wilderness areas could come before the House Interior Committee late this month. An amendment during Subcommittee on Public mark-up last December of the Eagle's Nest Wilderness Bill (Colorado) deleted the 6,270-acre East Meadow Creek area. This area was the subject of the now-famous Parker decision of 1969, which halted a Forest Service timber sale on the grounds that the wilderness character of the area should not be disrupted until a decision on wilderness classification was made by congress. Conservationists have proposed this area as part of an Eagle's Nest Wilderness for many years, and will strive to restore it to the bill in full committee action. East Meadow Creek is a valuable wildlife habitat and wilderness recreation area. Another threat to Eagle's Nest comes from the Denver Water Board, which is seeking deletions from the proposed wilderness to allow construction of water diversion units. Members in House Interior Committee districts are urged to write their representatives supporting restoration of the East Meadow Creek area, and opposing any amendments to delete other lands from the wilderness.

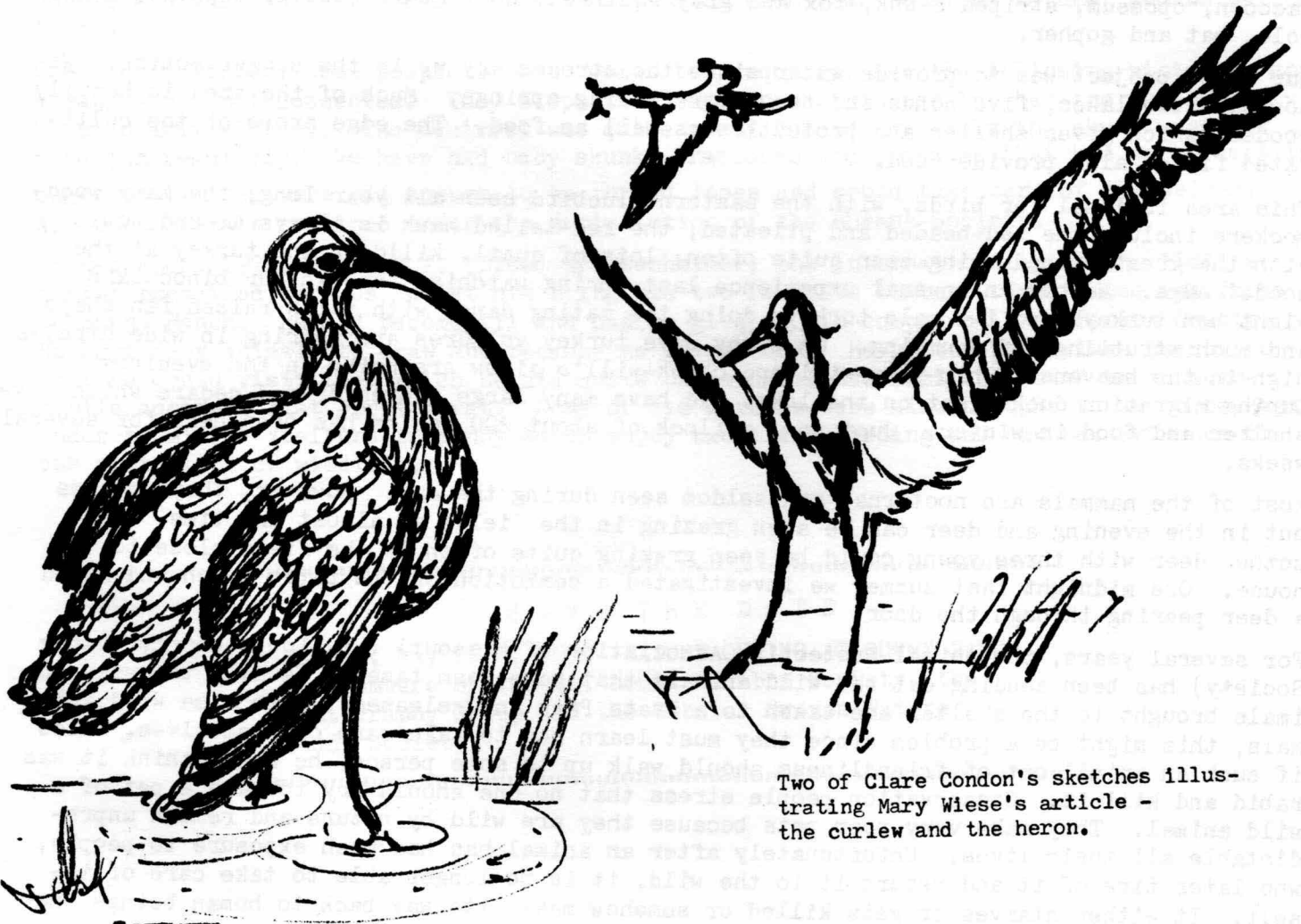
THE FUTURE OF CREVE COEUR LAKE

Edgar Denison

Creve Coeur Lake and its surroundings form a park, administered by the St. Louis County Department of Parks and Recreation. The lake, originally an "ox-bow" of the Missouri River is being fed by Creve Coeur Creek. Extensive construction of subdivisions in recent years on the hills surrounding the Missouri valley brought heavy siltation through the creek into the lake, until the end of that lovely lake was a matter of only a few years. To save the lake the Park Department initiated an ambitious dredging operation, which ultimately will restore a fairly deep lake. Huge amounts of mud and silt will be deposited on fields to the west of the lake.

In July 1975 the Park Department asked me to help in preparing a plan which would develop the park but also preserve nature wherever possible. With the help of a small committee this job was undertaken. I had the help of Rose Ann Bodman, Claudia Spener, Don Menke, Floyd Hallett and one very knowledgeable naturalist ranger, Jim Gerken, who was assigned to assist us.

Early in January a comprehensive report, covering many facets of development and conservation, and amounting to over 30 typewritten pages, was presented to the Park Department. Just to give a few facets: Our major plea is to keep motor boats away from Creve Coeur Lake. We provided for shorebird and migratory bird rest and feeding areas, and recommended viewing platforms for birders. Picnic facilities, a museum, a place for star-gazing, walking trails, a model farm, large-scale landscaping with native material, and many other features have been proposed. The plan received of the Boards of the St. Louis Audubon Society and of the Webster Groves Nature Study Society. Let us hope that our labors will bring the desired results.



Two of Clare Condon's sketches illustrating Mary Wiese's article - the curlew and the heron.



W I L D L I F E A T S U N N Y R A N C H

Burrell and Ruby Pickering

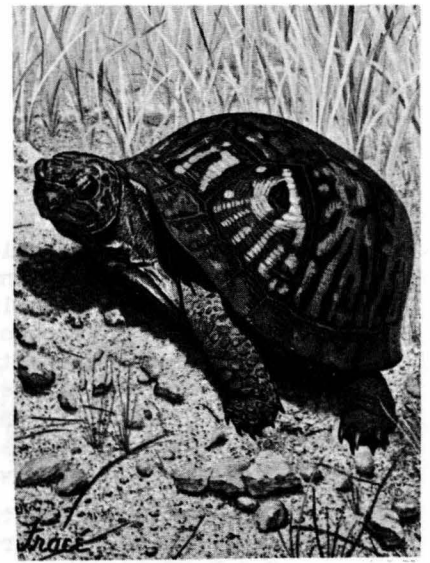
When we acquired our 500 acres in Warren County, Missouri, which we call Sunny Ranch, over twenty-one years ago, we made this into a wildlife area because of our concern for diminishing wildlife and our love of wild creatures. This is a brief story of our work with wildlife over the years and we are happy to say that today most species are fairly plentiful. A rather lengthy list includes the whitetail deer, red and gray fox, coyote, raccoon, opossum, striped skunk, fox and gray squirrel, cottontail rabbit, muskrat, mink, mole, bat and gopher.

Our first project was to provide water since the streams dry up in the summer months. We now have two lakes, five ponds and two never-failing springs. Much of the area is heavily wooded, which gives shelter and protection as well as food. The edge crops of the cultivated fields also provide food.

This area is ideal for birds, with the eastern bluebird seen all year long; the many woodpeckers include the red-headed and pileated; the red-tailed hawk is always around; owls with the great horned being seen quite often; lots of quail, killdeer and turkey at the woods' edge. We had an unusual experience last spring watching through our binoculars eight hen turkeys and two male turkeys doing the mating dance with tails raised fan shape and much strutting and drumming. On sunny days turkey vultures are soaring in wide circles high in the heavens. Whip-poor-will and chuck-will's widow are noisy in the evenings. During migration ducks rest on the lake. We have many large groves of red cedars which give shelter and food in winter. Just now, a flock of about 200 robins has been here for several weeks.

Most of the mammals are nocturnal and seldom seen during the day. However, they do come out in the evening and deer can be seen grazing in the fields at almost any time. One mother deer with three young could be seen grazing quite often in the field close to the house. One midnight last summer we investigated a commotion on the patio porch and found a deer peering through the door.

For several years, the Animal Protective Association of Missouri (St. Louis County Humane Society) has been sending out the wild animals that have been tamed. Usually the wild animals brought to the shelter are taken to a State Park and released. With tame wild animals, this might be a problem since they must learn how to take care of themselves. Also if such an animal out of friendliness should walk up to some person, he might think it was rabid and kill it. Conservation people stress that no one should try to make a pet of a wild animal. They make very poor pets because they are wild by nature and remain unpredictable all their lives. Unfortunately after an animal has had much exposure to people, who later tire of it and return it to the wild, it is no longer able to take care of itself. It either starves or gets killed or somehow makes its way back to human beings who will care for it.



One of the tame animals that arrived here was a huge raccoon that had been neutered. The story is that some hunters found a baby raccoon in the woods, took him to a veterinarian and had him operated on, kept him for a while and then, tiring of him, returned him to the Humane Society. We took him far into the woods near a pond and turned him loose. Three days later this raccoon was found sleeping in the loft of the barn, and it will be three years this May since he became a permanent resident. He is watered and fed each evening and a door was cut in the barn to enable him to get out and roam at will during the night. We named him Rascal, a name he tries to live up to. He is most friendly and scores of youngsters have petted him. (We might mention that we have many hundreds of students, scouts and various youth groups visit Sunny Ranch each year to study nature, and we welcome them.)

One recent winter, some people brought out a baby squirrel and the following winter we got a baby skunk not descended. They slept in a cage in the kitchen but had the run of the house nearly all day. The squirrel was quite messy but surprisingly the skunk used his sand pan regularly. We have had baby skunks, raccoons and opossums that had to be kept in cages until they were old enough to be turned loose and could take care of themselves. All such animals remained under the jurisdiction of the Humane Society.

In December, 1972, Richard P. (Dick) Grossenheider, the internationally known wildlife artist prevailed upon us to let him bring his two favorite timber wolves Romeo and Taiga to Sunny Ranch. He had become ill and had to give up his compound in Jefferson County. He kept many animals to draw and because he loved them. He wanted his wolves nearby so that he could visit them which he did quite often until his untimely death in an automobile accident last April first. Some of his coyotes were also brought to us to be kept under permit. Visitors to Sunny Ranch enjoy excellent birding and can see evidence of our protection of wildlife.

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SAVE THE DATE

Sunday, May 16th, 1976 NATURE OUTING AT SUNNY RANCH
for members of the St. Louis Audubon Society, the
Photography Group and the Webster Groves Nature
Study Society.

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NOTES FROM A NATURE NEOPHYTE
Clare Condon

Please excuse my unscientific approach to the nature scene in Missouri. As a family, we have enjoyed every minute spent in the woods, on the bluffs, rivers and in the creeks. We are filling in holes in our learning by becoming amateur botanists, birders, geologists, and more lately archeologists. This urge to extend our knowledge of the everyday things about us has given extra dimension and immense pleasure to our already busy lives, and has changed our whole life style. Through a wildflower group in the area, I had access to a cabin in the woods, where I planned to study the wildflowers I was painting. After Chris and the children had also borrowed this hideaway with me for at least a year, we convinced the owners that they wanted to sell it to us.

We are now among the three new families who have moved into the areas where the Stuessies, Massengales and Armstrongs walked and collected and studied in one of Missouri's special natural spots. We are grateful to them for the foresight they showed in protecting the creeks and glades and rare wildflowers. Along with the cabins, flowers, swimming, creeping and flying species, we have inherited the nature-loving friends of the original trio of families, and these have also become our friends and teachers, fellow foragers, birders and finders. Yesterday Mary Wiese showed me where she had just found the first hepatica ever recorded in our valley. When I use Edgar Denison's "Wild Flowers of Missouri" and know that some of the pictures were taken near our cabin, and when I can try to keep up with him on a wildflower quest, on glade, dirt road or woodland path, I am grateful.

I started to write this a week ago, when I had just found the first rue anemone in bloom beneath a protected bluff near the Big River. Also the greenery of things to come, like bloodroot, Dutchman's breeches and others. I was elated about finding flowers in bloom in the month of February, but terribly worried about the fate of all these early arrivals. I'm preying that future conversations, letters or articles will not be punctuated with "BF" and "AF" for "Before the Frost" and "After the Freeze" and vice versa. If we can slip into and out of the middle of April without another six inches of snow or a hard freeze, birders, flower lovers, jelly and jam makers (not to mention the commercial orchards and gardeners) should be "out of the woods" and in the woods, as well! I try to make some concoction from any and everything I find growing down there, from maple syrup in spring, through the elderflower fritter season to wild strawberry ice cream, and paw paw and persimmon pudding. I'm collecting recipes, should you have any to share, as I have a book in the hopper.



After seeing the Louisiana waterthrush by the creek weeks ago, and the phoebe back last week, I'm worried about our winged friends making it through a difficult period. Luckily the extra warm weather has meant many flying insects for them. Who wants to make any predictions now with any foreboding or unhappiness when we are surrounded by forsythias, daffodils and star magnolia, and when the early bird-song is loud and long?

Yesterday Mary Wiese and I returned to the protected area under the Big River bluff where the rue anemone was blooming last week. All over the rocky hillside were blood root, harbinger of spring, a few spring beauties and the leaves of many things to come. In this spot we watch a parade of flowers every year including the fire pink, trout lily, Dutchman's breeches, buttercups, trillium and a sea of Virginia bluebells. When we found the hepatica, this was the frosting on the cake, as many of you Auduboners can well understand, with your life lists of birds, mushrooms, lichens and edible plants.

If any of you are in this area in the next few weeks, or months, you will see many varieties of glade flowers, some pre-glacial, and perhaps more wild flowers than in other parts of the state, or the country, for that matter. Some of them in the woody areas are toothwort, wake robin, oxalis, cranesbill, blue-eyed Mary (introduced), corydalis, fire pink and shooting star. On the glades we find two kinds of puccoon (orange and yellow), Fremont's leather flower, birdfoot violets, flowering spurge, Missouri evening primrose, columbine, yellow star grass, coreopsis, more shooting stars, and small cancer root, to name just a few. In the boggy places, and near springs, we see the Indian paintbrush, spring cress and golden ragwort. Along the creek we find ladies' tresses orchids, and in the creek the spatterdock lily.



Outside the cabin door we found the hyssid buttercup in bloom yesterday; soon to be followed by the spring crocus, the local name for *Tradescantia longipes*, a smaller version of the more common spiderwort. The small version occurs in lovely color variants of rose, purple, blue and magenta. I also enjoy seeing the various shades of the dwarf larkspur and wild hyacinth.

Next week I'll go to a neighbor's spring and hope to find enough watercress for soup. Yesterday we gathered enough curly dock, dandelion, mustard and greasy bacon (Jefferson County lingo for the leaf rosettes of moth mullein) for a mess of greens. Bill Brush, take note! Lamb's quarters cannot be far behind.

So, all ye outdoorsmen and lovers of the land and preservers of our wild bounty, be of good cheer, whatever befalls us in the weather department! All cannot be lost. And the miracle that brings us the spring flowers will happen again in every year to come. If any of us has been in mid-winter doldrums up till last week, we're surely out of them by now, with a few walks over favorite country lanes and through the woods which have kept their promise early this year.

And on the lighter side, if you care to hear about record breakers, Bill Wiese went swimming in Mammoth Creek on February 28, and Clare Condon, after a long hot walk, celebrated Leap Year by leaping in headfirst, clothes and all. I can hear you punsters, now . . . "I always knew she was all wet!"

ANSWERS TO NEOPHYTE QUIZ ON p. 14

1. Liverleaf - *Hepatica triloba*
2. Rue Anemone - *Anemonella thalictroides*
3. Bloodroot - *Sanguinaria canadensis*
4. Dutchman's Breeches - *Dicentra cucullaria*
5. Spring Crocus - *Tradescantia longipes*
6. Coral Root - *Coralorhiza*
7. Harbinger of Spring - *Erigenia bulbosa*
8. Birdfoot Violet - *Viola pedata*
9. Trout lily - *Erythronium albidum*

The three sketches illustrating the article are, in order:
 Crane's Bill - *Geranium maculatum*
 Fire Pink - *Silene virginica*
 Violet wood Sorrel - *Oxalis violacea*



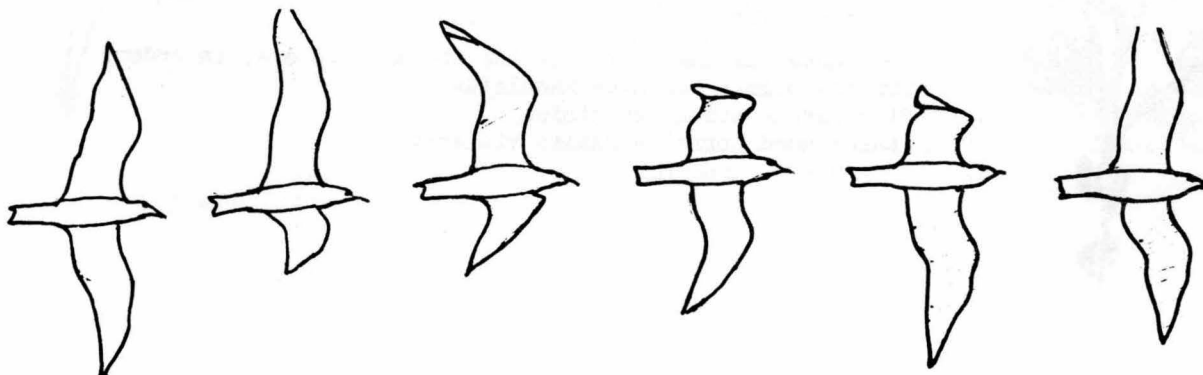
Dam Fighters Conference in Washington

A major conference on dams and water resources has been scheduled to coincide with the House and Senate Appropriations Committees' hearings which will begin March 29th and run through April 8th. Every spring many individuals and groups come to Washington to testify before the Appropriations Subcommittee on Public Works about bad dam and canal projects in their various areas. The Environmental Policy Center and the American Rivers Conservation Council are planning a get together over the weekend between the hearing dates to discuss common problems we all have with federal water policies.

If all the dam fighters across the country who came to Washington for these annual hearings can get together to discuss joint action, we could have an enormous impact on federal plans for our riverways. The conference in D.C. will be announced to you soon. For more information call Brent Blackwelder, Bill Painter, or Pratt Remmel (202-547-6500.

**CONSERVATION FEDERATION
OF MISSOURI**

The St. Louis Audubon Society Board, at its meeting on February 16, decided to renew its membership in the Conservation Federation of Missouri and elected 3 delegates to the convention to be held in Jefferson City March 12th and 13th. Mrs. Earl Hath, Mrs. Richard S. Spener and Mrs. J. Russell Wilson were the delegates chosen.



CLARKSVILLE JANUARY 10, 1976

Warren Lammert

When Lee McKinley and I went up to Clarksville it was a darkish day with heavy cloud cover. The ice was solid above the dam, and there was open water below. We drove over the railroad tracks at the boat club, set up our scope and looked over the river. There were 51 eagles sitting in a line of trees, directly across from where we stood.

It was cold, the wind from the south. The birds were bunched together along the east bank - one tree might have 8 birds, the next 4 and the next tree might not have any, then there could be 10 in the next tree, and so on down the bank for a distance of not over 300 yards.

There were eagles on the ice, seven on one floe. In the water we estimated at least 400 common American Nergansers, large white waterfowl with black heads and pointed bills with some black marking around the neck and along the top body line.

Farther downstream we sighted eagles in trees away from the river; so we drove down to the Mar-Mac Subdivision where we saw a few flying, and a huge new flight of mergansers, absolutely breathtaking - streamlined, fast and in perfect formation!

We saw the largest number of birds around noon. There were very few golden eye, but the eagles and mergansers made the trip worthwhile. Concentrations usually occur after a prolonged period of zero weather at night and cold days. However, in twenty years I have never seen anything like this number of birds so close together.



A REVIEW OF ST. LOUIS AREA BIRDING IN 1975

J. Earl Comfort

1975 was an outstanding year for birders regardless of the manner in which they birded. The listers combined record keeping with the indescribable pleasure of birding. There were 22 who listed more than 200 area species (within a 50-mile radius) during the year. No subspecies were counted, and, though the competition was keen, everyone did all in his power to steer fellow-birders to new finds.

Joey Eades topped the list with an impressive 258 kinds, followed by Dave Jones with 251; Kyrle Boldt, 242; Viola Bucholtz, 240; Jack Van Benthuyzen, 239; Ron Goetz, 238; Earl Comfort, 236; Kathryn Arhos, 230; Dr. Joe Eades, 228; George Barker, 228; Terry Barker, 226; Vi Hallett, 222; Rose Ann Bodman, 221; Claudia Spener, 221; Floyd Hallett, 217; Vivian Liddell, 216; Helen Wuestenfeld, 215; Dick Anderson, 215; Janet Neilson, 212; Mary Wiese, 210; Tim Barksdale, 209; and Dr. Ralph Laffey, 207.

The warbler and finch families with 36 species each had the greatest number of representatives. The rarest warbler was the black-throated blue, and the best finch the snow bunting. Of the 31 kinds of shorebirds, the rarest was the ruff. There were 23 kinds of ducks and 19 species of raptors. Of these the ferruginous hawk was the most unusual.

The total 1975 area count was 288 species. The 12 kinds considered the rarest (in the American Ornithologist Union list order) were Western grebe, glossy ibis, common scoter, ferruginous hawk, sandhill crane, black rail, California gull, laughing gull, saw-whet owl, black-billed magpie, common redpoll and snow bunting. The bird of the year was the magpie Kyrle Boldt found at the August A Busch Wildlife Area in St. Charles County, a favorite area for most birders. All in all, 1975 was a good birding year.

FOR FELLOW NEOPHYTE BOTANISTS
by Clare Condon
How many of these spring flowers do you know?



LETTER FROM DR. HALLIWELL
to Tom Brooks



Dear Tom,

The following is a 5 month report of the St. Louis Audubon Society Grant-in-Aid for the Rehabilitation and Research on Birds of Prey, University of Missouri Grant #3811-2232. This report covers the period Sept. 18, 1975 through Feb. 10, 1976.

During this time period, the above-described Grant-in-Aid has offered medical assistance to the following birds of prey: American kestrel (4), Red Shouldered Hawk (1), Ferruginous Rough Legged Hawk (1), Great Horned Owl (3), Golden Eagle (1), Red-Tailed Hawk (8), Bald Eagle (3) Albino Black Vulture (1); and maintenance of 3 Golden Eagles and 1 Bald Eagle for the breeding program.

During this time period, the program has offered consultation and assistance to veterinarians throughout the United States and Canada in the diagnosis and treatment of diseases in birds of prey.

The staff that has assisted in the above described Grant-in-Aid has had one paper presented at the American Association of Zoo Veterinarians Annual Convention in San Diego, California November 2-5, 1975, entitled, "A Preliminary Report on the Hematology and Chemical Profiles in Selected Birds of Prey." This paper will subsequently be published in the Journal of Zoo Animal Medicine.

During the past year, two articles have been published by members of the staff of the above described Grant which were not directly supported by the St. Louis Audubon Society but should be mentioned.

1. Ivins, G., Halliwell, W.H.: "Sex Determination in Raptorial Birds: A Study of Chromatin Bodies." Journal of Zoo Animal Medicine 6, 9-10, 1975.
2. Halliwell, W. H.: "Bumblefoot Infections in Birds of Prey." Journal of Zoo Animal Medicine 6, 4-6, 1975.

Dr. William H. Halliwell has been the group editor for the chapter on Diseases of Birds of Prey to be included in a new book entitled, Zoo Animal Medicine, that will be published by the W. B. Saunders Co. in the summer of 1976. This Chapter is a comprehensive review of the taxonomy, physiology, maintenance, surgical and diagnostic procedures involving viral, mycotic, bacterial and parasitic diseases of birds of prey. Included in this chapter is a segment on the hematology of birds of prey which has been supported through the above described Grant-in-Aid.

Expenditures from the above-described Grant-in-Aid to this date are as follows: Research Materials: \$100, Construction of a breeding chamber approximately 11 x 23 x 18 feet in an existing Butler building on the University of Missouri campus: \$225, Miscellaneous equipment to maintain the birds during rehabilitation: \$60.

Outstanding debts as of this date:

Clinical Pathology (approx.) -----	\$150
Surgery & Radiology -----	200
Biologicals -----	30
Pharmaceuticals -----	100
Total spent or owing to date	\$865

Sincerely,

William H. Halliwell, DVM, Ph.D.
Associate Professor



AUDUBON WILDLIFE FILMS



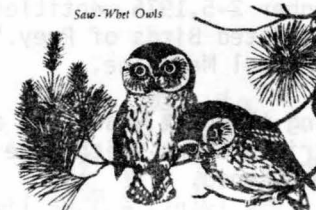
The last of the three Audubon Wildlife Films presented by the St. Louis Audubon will be shown April 2 at the Ethical Society Auditorium, 9001 Clayton Road, at 8:15 P.M. The photographers are Greg and Linda McMillan and they entitle their film "Papua New Guinea: Twilight of Eden"

North of Australia, New Guinea is the world's largest island. Its tropical situation governs the land, its natural history and its people. The natives of Papua New Guinea are as much a part of the ecology of the land as are the many forms of wildlife. Both worlds are examined in this film: the agricultural and social life of man on Papua New Guinea and the highly specialized, greatly varied forms and lives of the tropical jungle wildlife. Papua New Guinea is fascinating, unfamiliar and wild. It has never before been the subject of an Audubon Wildlife Film



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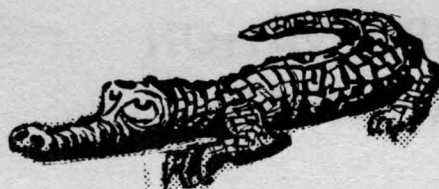
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CONSERVATION CALENDAR



March and April, 1976

March 5 Friday 8:00 P.M. St. Louis Audubon Society Special Program. Ethical Society Auditorium, 9001 Clayton Road. Film on Kirtland's Warbler, followed by a color slide show Surprises of the Seasons by award-winning photographers Lee and Ed Mason.

March 9 Tuesday 8:00 P.M. WGNSS Botany Group Meeting. Webster Groves Trust Company meeting room, Lockwood and Gore. John Molyneaux will speak on "Early Spring in Missouri" with slides to illustrate.

March 9 Tuesday 8:00 P.M. Sierra Club Energy Resources Subcommittee Meeting 8708 Sturdy Dr. Crestwood. Chairman: Marilyn Harlan 966-8797.

March 11 Thursday Compass and Map Reading Class Contact Barb Muhlack for further information. 428-2438 or 694-6436.

March 12 Friday WGNSS Indoor Adventure 8:00 P.M. Ireland, that Ancient Land as seen through the eyes of Mary Wiese.

March 13 Saturday 8:00 A.M. WGNSS Ornithology Trip to Busch Wildlife Area. Meet at old "shop" lake. Bring lunch. Leader: Kathryn Arhos.

March 13 and 14 Saturday and Sunday Sierra Two Day Float on the Eleven Point River. Leaders Sue and Skip Hart, 385-0138.

March 13 and 14 Saturday and Sunday Sierra Club Two Day Backpack on the Trace Creek Trail See the trail being built by the Sierra Club in Clark National Forest. Leader: Roy Hengerson, 694-6272.

March 14 Sunday Sierra Club One Day Bicycle Outing in West St. Louis County. Leader: Dana Gallup, 432-2070.

March 14 Sunday St. Louis Audubon Photography Walk 10:00 A.M. Washington State Park, 12 miles south of De Soto on Highway 21. Meet at parking lot in front of dining lodge at bottom of hill. Bring lunch. Leaders: Herman and Edith Brune.

March 15 Monday 7:30 P.M. Coalition for the Environment Rap Session on St. Louis Environmental Issues. Coalition office, 6267 Delmar.

March 16 Tuesday 7:30 P.M. Coalition for the Environment Executive Committee Meeting Coalition Office 6267 Delmar. Visitors welcome.

March 17 Wednesday 7:30 P.M. Sierra Club Environmental Education Committee Meeting 8701 Litzinger Drive. Chairman: Ed Schmidt, 962-1096.

March 17 Wednesday CREEP THROUGH THE ARBORETUM at Gray Summit. Bring your small children. Leader: Linda Pryor, 361-3696

March 18 Thursday Sierra Club Trails Committee 7:30 P.M. Contact Larry Wicklund, 878-8140.

March 18 Thursday 12:30 (coffee 1:00 P.M.) Panel Discussion on Drinking Water Problems Church of the Holy Communion, Jackson and Delmar. Sponsored by the League of Women Voters.

March 20 and 21 Saturday and Sunday Sierra Club St. Francis Canoe Races. Call Jack Palmer 391-0331

March 21 Sunday Sierra Club Trail Building Outing. Call Bill Hagen, 428-1489, or Larry Wicklund, 878-8140

March 23 Tuesday 10:00 A.M. and 7:30 P.M. WGNSS Lower Plants Group Home of Lillian Nagel at 5616 Oleatha.

March 27 Saturday 8:00 A.M. WGNSS Field Trip to Swan Lake, Calhoun County area. Meet at Missouri side of Alton Dam. Bring lunch.

March 27 and 28 Saturday and Sunday Sierra Club Float Trips For details call Dave Gildehaus, 961-3478, or Art Evans, 787-9966

CONSERVATION CALENDAR



April 2 Friday St. Louis Audubon Wildlife Film 8:15 P.M. Ethical Society, 9001 Clayton Road. Greg and Linda McMillan will present "Papua New Guinea: Twilight of Eden."

April 2 Friday Coalition for the Environment Annual Meeting 7:30 P.M. Brentwood Community Center, 2348 S. Brentwood Blvd. Speaker: David D. Comey from Business and Professional People for the Public Interest.

April 3 Saturday Sierra Club One Day Float on Mineral Fork. Call Barb Muhlack, 694-6436 or 428-2438.

April 4 Sunday Sierra Spring Stream Splash and Ecology Hike. Leader: Roger Pryor, 361-3696 Limited to first 12 persons.

April 6 Tuesday 7:45 P.M. ST. LOUIS AUDUBON SOCIETY PHOTOGRAPHY MEETING. Clayton-Federal Savings and Loan Auditorium, Elm and Lockwood, Webster Groves. "Big, Bad and Beautiful Bugs" by Jerry Turk. Meeting Hostess: Miss Betty Nettles

April 9 Friday WGNSS Annual Banquet 6:00 P.M. Social Hour, 7:00 P.M. Dinner Paul Bauer will present a program entitled "Yucatan - Mayan Mexico"

April 9 Friday Sierra Club Social Evening with slides of the National Sierra Backpacking Trip in the Pecos Wilderness. For details call Les Harmon, 447-5248, or 232-5161.

April 10 Saturday WGNSS Lower Plants Field Trip. 10:00 A.M. Hawn State Park Meet at picnic area.

April 10 and 11 Saturday and Sunday Sierra Club Two Day Poling Trip on the Courtois Leader: Dave Gildehaus, 961-3478

April 11 Sunday ST. LOUIS AUDUBON SOCIETY PHOTOGRAPHY WALK Little Creek Wildlife Area Leader Jerry Turk. Meet at the Little Creek Wildlife Area at 9:30 A.M. The area lies between Washington Avenue and Florissant Avenue on the north side of Highway 270 (the opposite side of 170 from the Florissant Valley Community College)

April 16, 17, and 18 Friday, Saturday and Sunday Sierra Club Easter in Mingo Wildlife Refuge. Leader John Stade, 524-3322.

April 18 and 25 Sundays St. Louis Audubon Society Spring Bird Walks 8:00 A.M. Forest Park All interested persons meet at the parking area in rear of the Art Museum.

April 24 Saturday St. Louis Audubon Society Spring Bird Walk 8:30 A.M. Shaw's Garden Meet at main gate.

April 24 and 25 Saturday and Sunday Sierra Club Midwest Regional Conservation Committee Pleasant Valley, south of Woodstock in northern Illinois. Contact Dick Kutta, 993-3045 or Roger Pryor, 361-3696

April 25 Sunday Sierra Club Picnic at the Dogwood shelter in Breensfelder Park. Call Mary Ouellet for reservations and food assignments. Committee will provide the meat at 1.00 per adult and 75 cents for children- maximum cost per family \$4.00. Telephone 394-7134

April 27 Tuesday Environmental Update 9:30 A.M. to 3:00 P.M. J. C. Penney Building at the University of Missouri - St. Louis. See details on p. 3 of this bulletin.

May 1 Saturday 8:30 A.M. St. Louis Audubon Society Spring Bird Walk Shaw's Garden. Meet at main gate.

May 1 Saturday St. Louis Audubon Photography Group Workshop and Exploration at Rice Farm

May 2 and 9 Sundays St. Louis Audubon Society Spring Bird Walks 8:00 A.M. Forest Park Meet at the parking area in rear of the Art Museum.

May 4 Tuesday 7:45 P.M. St. Louis Audubon Society Photography Section Meeting. Clayton-Federal Savings and Loan Auditorium, Elm and Lockwood, Webster Groves. Linnie Dallao will present a program on dyeing and cropping slides. Host: Charles Hill.

TICKET

**St. Louis Audobon Society
Annual Meeting and Dinner
Monday, May 24, 1976**

Sesquicentennial Room
Busch Memorial Center
St. Louis University
(see map on back of ticket)

Dinner — \$7.25

(Choice of entree:

London broil or

Vegetarian plat with Quiche)

Cash Bar — 6 to 7 P.M.

(Fruit juices available)

Dinner — 7 P.M.

Guests welcome.

*Reservations must be
received by*

Saturday, May 15, 1976

Retain this stub to present at door.

Name _____

Number of reservations _____

Cut Here

RESERVATION

*Fill out and mail this stub with check payable to St. Louis Audobon
Society to:*

Mrs. Edwin F. Stuessie
1424 Bridle Road
Webster Groves, Mo. 63119

Enclosed in a check for \$ _____ for _____ reservations.

_____ prefer London Broil _____ prefer Vegetarian plate

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____